

*(San Antonio, TX) - Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) delivered the following remarks at the VA Polytrauma announcement today at Audie Murphy VA Hospital in San Antonio, TX.*

"I would like to thank everyone for being here today. I would first like to welcome the Under Secretary, Dr. Kussman and Admiral Kunne to San Antonio. And I would like to thank them for their work in designating the VA's 5th Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center here in San Antonio.

"The city of San Antonio takes pride in the services it provides to veterans and injured military. And the community has always welcomed and embraced those who come to San Antonio for medical services, whether here at the VA or at Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC). I want to let you all know that the selection of San Antonio for this facility was without a doubt the right one. And our wounded warriors will be better served because of this decision.

"I have been working hard to provide the necessary funding to fund this facility as quickly as possible in order for the center to more quickly begin service to our veterans.

"I would also like to thank the Senator for her work in helping make this center a reality for our troops and for San Antonio. I know Senator Hutchison has been working diligently to make this center a reality and I am proud to have partnered with her to bring this center to San Antonio.

"As you know, we were able to secure the first \$30 million for this project earlier this year as part of the War Supplemental Appropriations Bill. I would also like to recognize, my good friend from Texas, Chairman Chet Edwards, who was not able to be here today, but whose leadership in bringing this polytrauma center to Texas also deserves mention.

"It is my hope that with help from Senator Hutchison, Chairman Edwards, Congressman Charlie Gonzalez and the Veterans Administration; we can achieve the full funding for this project by year's end.

"The Acting Network Director, Tim Shea has been a great asset for the VA here in San Antonio, and I would like to thank him for his service to our veterans.

"We all are united in the belief that our nation's wounded warriors deserve the best possible care. This community has proved their commitment to that belief over and over again. Because of this, I know that our country's wounded are in good hands here in San Antonio. Thank you."

###